

FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION

POLICY DECISION

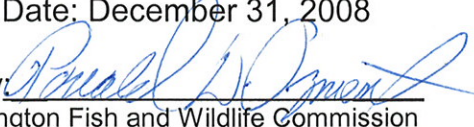
POLICY TITLE: Lower Columbia
Sturgeon Management

POLICY NUMBER: C-3001

Cancels: POL – C-3001
Adopted January 1, 2003

Effective Date: January 1, 2006
Termination Date: December 31, 2008

See Also:

Approved by: 
Chair, Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission

Lower Columbia Sturgeon Management Policies:

- Manage lower Columbia River sturgeon through a three-year agreement with Oregon, with the ability to reopen policy discussions if there is a substantial change to population abundance or significant new biological information.
- Provide adequate recruitment and regulatory protection to safeguard the broodstock population.
- Manage for optimal sustainable yield (OSY) by setting a combined sport and commercial harvest rate for the legal-sized population.
- Maintain concurrent Washington and Oregon regulations in the Columbia River.
- Maintain viable and diverse recreational and commercial fishing opportunities.
- The base period for determining viability and diversity for recreational opportunity among geographic areas should be calculated using recent years (e.g., 1995-2000).
- Manage sturgeon harvests outside the mainstem lower Columbia River consistent with lower Columbia River sturgeon conservation and management needs.
- Limit incidental impacts on other species needing conservation protection during fisheries directed at white sturgeon.

Management Objectives for 2006-2008:

- Manage for an annual combined sport and commercial harvest of white sturgeon to provide population growth towards OSY.
- Maintain the 80/20 sport/commercial harvest allocation.
- Develop sport fishery regulations consistent with the following objectives:
 - Minimize emergency in-season action;
 - Balance catch between estuary and non-estuary fisheries and maintain a diverse array of sturgeon fishing opportunity; and
 - Maintain fishery monitoring and management capabilities.
- Develop commercial fishery regulations consistent with the following objectives:
 - Optimize economic value (adjust to market needs);
 - Spread harvest opportunity throughout the year; and
 - No green sturgeon target fisheries.
- Provide sufficient sturgeon spawning sanctuaries or other protection measures where appropriate to ensure adequate recruitment to the population.
- Provide appropriate added protective measures to prevent further decline of green sturgeon.

- Conduct all practical research to assess broodstock abundance and to quantify impacts of commercial and recreational fisheries on broodstock abundance.
- Delegate negotiation and adoption authority to the Director for a new three-year (2006-2008) Lower Columbia Sturgeon Management Plan that is consistent with these policies and objectives.